Commentary

I Kings 1:15-17

Cornelius a Lapide

15. RESPONDENS ANNA : NEQUAQUAM, INQUIT, DOMINE MI,] temulenta vel ebria sum, uti tu putas, mihique audacter nimis objicis. Notat S. Chrysost. reverentiam, humilitatem et modestiam Annæ, quæ convicium ebrietatis, quod in femina est grave et pudendum, sibi ab Heli objectum patienter tulit, et simplici negatione refellit, ac Heli Dominum vocat, ejusque ut sacerdoti afflictionem suam pandit, ideoque ab eo benedici, et voti filiique compotem fieri meruit. Audi S. Gregor. Dominum sacerdotem vocans ebriam se esse abnegat, ut superiori ordini ex humilitate se subderet, et falsæ objectioni cum veritate contradiceret.

15. ANNA ANSWERING SAYS: BY NO MEANS MY LORD,] am I drunk or intoxicated, as thou supposest, and thou dost charge me too boldly." St. Chrysostom notes the reverence, humility, and modesty of Anna, who patiently bore from Heli the reproach of drunkenness, which in a woman is grave and shameful, and refuted it by a simple denial. She calls Heli "lord," and opens to him, as to a priest, her affliction; therefore she deserved to be blessed by him and to become possessor of her vow and of a son. Hear St. Gregory: "Calling the priest lord, she denies that she is drunk, so that out of humility she might subject herself to the higher order, and with truth contradict the false objection."

SED EFFUDI ANIMAM MEAM IN CONSPECTU DOMINI,] animam, id est, animæ meæ angustias, mærores, afflictiones, item desideria, vota et spes concipiendi prolem; hæc enim omnia, et consequenter totum quasi cor, totamque animam suam Anna orando Deo repræsentabat, et instar aquæ sinceræ et candidæ effundebat, nihil sibi reservans, nil latens vel occultum tenens, sed omnia pandens et in sinum Dei effundens. Unde S. Chrys. hom. de fide Annæ : Nequaquam, ait, aberraverit, qui hanc mulierem pueri simul et matrem et patrem appellarit; quamquam enim et vir addiderat semen, hujus tamen deprecatio vim efficaciamque semini præbuit, effecitque ut Samuel auspicatoribus exordiis nasceretur.

BUT I HAVE POURED OUT MY SOUL IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD,] *soul*, that is, the distresses of my soul, sorrows, afflictions, likewise desires, vows, and hopes of conceiving offspring. For all these things, and consequently almost her whole heart and her whole soul, Anna, by praying, set before God, and poured them out like sincere and clear water, reserving nothing to herself, keeping nothing hidden or concealed, but laying all things open and pouring them into the bosom of God. Hence St. Chrysostom, in the homily on the faith of Anna, says: "By no means would he have erred who called this woman at once the mother and father of the boy; for although the husband also added the seed, nevertheless her supplication supplied force and efficacy to the seed, and brought it about that Samuel should be born with auspicious beginnings."

Nonnulli apud Abulens. sic exponunt : effudi animam, id est, bilem et iram animæ meæ in conspectu Domini, repræsentans ei motus iræ, quos conceperam contra Phenenam me subsannantem, eorumque remedium et solatium ab eo postulans, ut effusa tota coram Deo cordis mei ira, cor hoc felle liberarem, ne quid in eo remaneret, quod in Phenenam æmulam meam per os et verba iracunda effunderem. Atque hoc præsens iræ et indignationis remedium esse, ut scilicet quis eam totam coram Deo per orationem effundat, docet Abulensis et alii.

Some among Abulensis explain it thus: "I have poured out my soul," that is, the bile and anger of my soul, in the sight of the Lord, representing to Him the motions of anger which I had conceived against Phenenna mocking me, and asking from Him their remedy and consolation, so that, when all the anger of my heart had been poured out before God, I might free this heart from gall, lest anything should remain in it which I might pour out against Phenenna my rival through my mouth and angry words. And Abulensis and others teach that this is a present remedy for anger and indignation: namely, that one should pour the whole of it out before God through prayer.

16. NE REPUTES ANCILLAM TUAM QUASI UNAM DE FILIABUS BELIAL,] puta ebriam, sceleratam et impiam. Vide quæ de Belial dixi 2. Corinth. 6. Nota, inquit S. Hieron. in quæst. quod omnes qui ebrietatem sectantur filii Belial vocantur. Ita S. Hieron. et ex eo Angelomus.

16. DO NOT RECKON THY HANDMAID AS ONE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF BELIAL, that is, as drunk, wicked, and impious. See what I said concerning Belial at 2 Corinthians 6. "Note," says St. Jerome in the Questions, "that all who follow after drunkenness are called sons of Belial." Thus St. Jerome, and from him Angelomus.

17. TUNC HELI AIT EI : VADE IN PACE, ET DEUS ISRAEL DET TIBI PETITIONEM TUAM.] Ecce, fructus reverentiæ et humilitatis est Pontificis benedictio et fausta precatio, quæ Annam voti compotem fecundamque effecit. Mulier, ait S. Chrysost. ex accusatore fecit patronum, nacta est intercessorem quem habuerat objurgatorem. Notat Theod. conjugibus ambiendam esse sacerdotis benedictionem, ut prolem suscipiant probam et sanctam, uti contigit hîc Annæ; Samuel enim non tam Annæ, quam Dei filius, Annæ ab eo per benedictionem Heli datus censeri debuit.

17. THEN HELI SAID TO HER: GO IN PEACE, AND MAY THE GOD OF ISRAEL GIVE THEE THY PETITION. Behold, the fruit of reverence and humility is the blessing and favorable prayer of the Pontiff, which made Anna possessor of her vow and fruitful. "The woman," says St. Chrysostom, "made a patron out of an accuser; she obtained as intercessor the one whom she had had as a rebuker." Theodoret notes that married persons should seek the blessing of a priest, that they may receive good and holy offspring, as happened here to Anna; for Samuel ought to be considered not so much the son of Anna as the son of God, given to Anna by Him through the blessing of Heli.

cum femina ebria colloqui.

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